

# *Executive Officer's Statement*

February 21, 2008

---

- **VOCA Update**

The President's budget request for 2009 once again proposes to rescind the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) fund balance, which would leave a zero balance in the fund at the beginning of 2010. The budget request also proposes a further \$53 million reduction in VOCA funding. For federal fiscal year 2008, the President signed an appropriations bill that reduced the VOCA funding cap to \$590 million, a reduction of \$35 million. The 2008 reduction is not expected to affect the 60 percent matching grant that helps fund the Victim Compensation Program, but does impact Victim Assistance funding.

- **Strategic Plan Progress Report**

Two years ago we developed a strategic plan for the organization with the commitment to review and update that plan as needed. During the past few months, the executive management team has been working to update the strategic plan. We've held a number of facilitated sessions to review and consider the mission, vision and core values that guide our organization and have made significant changes. Additional sessions are scheduled to determine our strategic goals, set performance targets and establish strategic metrics. When completed, we will present the plan at town hall meetings with staff to gather their input. The strategic plan will be finalized after review and incorporation of important comments from staff. We hope to have the final document for the Board's review at the May Board meeting.

- **Outreach to Victim Service Providers**

The Victim Compensation Program has launched a special campaign to inform and dialogue with victim service providers about the program. This outreach effort is highlighted by provider information forums statewide. We are also making presentations at meetings of professional licensing boards, whose licensees provide services to victims of crime, and at meetings of professional associations. This month we gave presentations at the Board of Psychology and the California Marriage and Family Therapists Leadership Conference. We have an additional presentation scheduled this month for a counseling group in San Jose. Additional meetings are being scheduled.

- **2008 Statutes and Regulations**

I'm pleased to present to the Board our new 2008 Statutes and Regulations, which have been updated and provide easy reference to our laws and regulations.

- **California District Attorneys Association Conference**

The Victim's Rights Committee meeting at the California's District Attorneys Association Conference earlier this month was well attended, both by elected District Attorneys and others who work serving victims of crime. A variety of issues were discussed, including updates from Susan Fisher and Tom Sawyer of the Governor's office and other state agencies, concern over the impact of prisoner releases, and completion of the Victims Rights Manual. We distributed materials that included our video, "Helping Victims Every Day," and our 2008 Statutes and Regulations.

(Continued)

**In Memoriam**

The Board was saddened by the passing of longtime employee Rodney Walker and former board member Bennie O'Brien.

Rodney Walker worked his entire 21-year state career at the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board. He was a big man with a gentle heart. He worked in the Business Services Section, where he handled all the major copy jobs for the Board. Rodney will be missed and fondly remembered.

Governor Pete Wilson appointed Bennie O'Brien to the then Board of Control in 1995, where she served until 2001. I had the privilege of serving on the Board with Bennie. At that time, the Board traveled throughout the state and heard victim appeals. Bennie was always prepared, listened intently to those appearing before the Board, understood the laws, treated victims with a great deal of respect, and appreciated the work of the Board's staff. Bennie's contributions will long be remembered.

**Awareness Campaign**

**The VCGCB participated, or will participate, in the following events and meetings:**

- International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment in San Diego.
- California District Attorneys Association (CDAA) Winter Workshop in Santa Barbara.
- National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards' Southern-Western Regional Meeting in San Antonio.
- "Discover the Connections! Bridging Strategies to Prevent Child Injury and Maltreatment," a Sacramento conference sponsored by the California Department of Public Health, California Department of Social Services and Center for Injury Prevention Policy and Practice at San Diego State University.
- California Police Chiefs Association Annual Conference in Fresno.
- Sponsor and exhibitor at the Cyber Safe California Summit in Burbank, presented by the California State and Consumer Services Agency, Department of Consumer Affairs and Office of Privacy Protection.